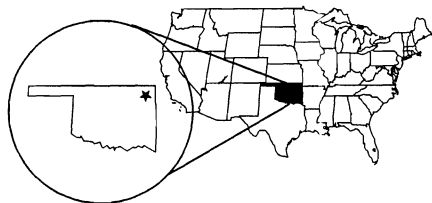


LENNI LENAPE (OR EASTERN DELAWARE)



The Lenni Lenape, or Delaware Indians, are divided into two distinct tribes in western and eastern Oklahoma. The Western Delaware are based in the town of Anadarko [see Delaware of Western Oklahoma]. The Eastern Delaware, in the north-eastern corner of Oklahoma, still

use the Algonquin name *Lenni Lenape* which means “true men”. Its three main divisions are the Unalactigo, the Unami, and the Munsee.

The flag of the Lenni Lenape is white with the tribal seal in red, white, and black (Annin & Co.). Near the center of the seal is a traditional Delaware mask divided red on the left and black on the right. Mask-making is common among aboriginal peoples on all continents and was widely practiced by the Native peoples of America.

This mask represents *Mesingw*, the “Masked Spirit” of traditional Lenape legend (*The Indians of the Delaware Valley exhibit*, Mercer Museum, Doylestown, PA). *Mesingw* is the guardian of forest creatures, the main source of food to all eastern tribes, much as the buffalo was to the nations of the Plains. In front of the mask appear a peace pipe and fire starter.



Surrounding these central images, placed at the four points of the compass, are symbols relevant to the Lenni Lenape. At the north is a Christian cross, representing the current religion of the people. At the east is a turkey claw for the Unalactigo; at the south is a turtle for the Unami; at the west is a wolf paw print for the Munsee.

Around the seal are “SEAL OF THE DELAWARE TRIBE” above and “LENNI LENAPE” below, all in black. Separating these emblems

from the wording are a series of bars or sticks bearing various designs. These sticks may represent the *Walum Olum*, “red score”, a pictograph carved on wood and used to record the Lenni Lenape’s legends, history, and migrations (ENAT, 78-80). 🍷